

## W2ASACT MEETING NOTES

Meeting on January 8, 2019, 9:30 am to 12 pm

Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation, 1539 11<sup>th</sup> Ave, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conf. room 225

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### Members and participants present:

Anna Miller	DNRC - CARDD	Lindsay Volpe	DNRC - CARDD
Alice Stanley	DNRC - RDB	Lisa Moisey	Bear Paw Dev
Brad Catron	DNRC - RDB	Mark Smith	DEQ - ENG - DW
Denise Cook	DNRC - CARDD	Mike Abrahamson	DEQ - ENG - WW
Erin Wall	MRWS	Nick V. Clos	MRWS
Erin Zindt	MAP	Pam Nelson	Commerce - BOI
John Camden	MRWS	Rika Lashley	Morrison Maierle
Kari Smith	DEQ - Water Quality	Sonja Hoeglund	DNRC - CARDD
Kevin Smith	DEQ - ENG	Steve Shope	MAP

### Via Conf. Phone:

None announced

DEQ - DRF – Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program  
 DEQ – Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
 DEQ - WRF – Wastewater State Revolving Loan program  
 DNRC - SRF - Wastewater State Revolving Loan program  
 DNRC – WRF - Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program  
 FDB – Financial Development Bureau  
 MAP – Midwest Assistance Program  
 MBOI – Montana Board of Investments  
 MRWS – Montana Rural Water Systems  
 RATES – Rural and Tribal Environmental Solutions  
 RDB – Resource Development Bureau  
 TSEP – Treasure State Endowment Program

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### Call to Order, Sign-in Sheet, Agenda Changes

Chair Anna Miller called the scheduled meeting of the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W2ASACT) to order at 9:32am, on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. The sign-in sheet was routed and the meeting agenda and draft minutes from the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were distributed. Those present briefly introduced themselves. Anna asked if anyone was on the phone. Although no callers were announced, background noise could be heard. There were no revisions to the October 13<sup>th</sup> minutes, which were approved and

adopted. Due to the Federal Government shutdown, we had no representatives from USDA-RD or the Congressional offices. Anna also noted that the 66<sup>th</sup> Montana Legislative Session is underway, and she mentioned her support of the governor's budget and also encouraged all to check out the session.

It was noted that we had new personal present from MAP and MRWS.

## **Presentation**

### Anna Miller, DNRC Financial Advisor - Governor's Infrastructure Bill

Anna invited the Montana Office of Budget and Program Planning (OBPP). Since today is day 2 of the 66<sup>th</sup> Montana Legislative Session, Anna will go over HB 14. She handed out copies of the bill, which is the bonding bill. Anna noted that she supports the Governor's budget. She also said that the website for Legislative Fiscal Division has changed so finding where things are might take some time. Alice Stanley suggested bookmarking the website, which is <https://leg.mt.gov/lfd/>.

Anna began by saying that this Legislative Session is slated to go until May 1<sup>st</sup>. She said a bill starts in sub-committees. House bills 8 and 11 will be heard early in Long Range Planning. HB 6 and 7, the Renewable Resource and Reclamation Development programs have cash. Unfunded projects from the RRG/RDG are now in HB 14 and will be funded by bonds. She pointed out on page 7 of HB 14, the \$7 million in funding does not begin until July 1, 2019. These were the contingency TSEP projects that carried over from the last Special Legislative session. She noted that on page 8, we can see the "new" TSEP projects.

On HB 14 page 13, are emergency and planning grants. These are funded with cash interest money. Alice reminded all that HB 6, the RRGL bill, is in each session. There are 36 projects in HB 6. The remaining projects are in bonding. Contingent or reconsideration RRG projects are in HB 6. Anna reiterated that there won't be cash right away when a bill passes. That cash will be available after interest payments come in to the RRG program.

Alice pointed out that the RRGL bill will be heard at the same time as TSEP's bill. Lindsay noted that on LFD's website, you can set up a preference list and then receive notifications when a bill is up for consideration. Anna suggested that as many people are scheduled to testify on a bill, we set aside a few minutes for each person. She reminded all that we can also listen to the proceedings and sometimes view the committee meetings. The audio is live. Anna continued by saying that the bill moves from the sub-committee and then into full house appropriations. John Camden said MRW will send out emails to notify those who may be needed to testify. Sarah Robbins urged caution in starting projects since we have to wait for the funding to be available. Anna suggested that those who are waiting for funding, contact their TSEP person for help.

Anna said the sub-committees make recommendations to appropriations since the sub-committees have no authority to amend bills. Anna suggested to all to talk to your Legislators and encourage them to look at bills that affect their projects and funding. Since Tom Livers, the new Budget Director, is new in his role, he brings a new perspective.

Anna asked if anyone is seeing effects of the Federal Government shutdown, which is in its third week. Rika and Sarah both said yes and that they have projects on hold during the shutdown. Pam added that BOI is trying to get funding to help some communities.

## **Program Updates**

John Camden with MRW – John reminded all of the next MRW conference February 20 – 22, 2019 at the Best Western in Great Falls. John mentioned new MRWS hires, Christy Cline and Erin Wall. Also on staff are Nick Close, Dan Cramer, Julie Allen, Rory Schmidt and Tanya Shadrack, who is in Admin. Some staff members have new roles at MRW.

John added that MRW has Steve Wade, a paid lobbyist and Steve will help them out this session. John reported that USDA has asked MRW to do 30 contracts per month. He suggested talking to operators about issues. John said this year's MRW conference is in its 40<sup>th</sup> year and the workshop beforehand is on Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. There are 51 training sessions planned. Lieutenant Governor Mike Cooney has been confirmed to speak. Anna Miller and John Tubbs will present on MRW history. John passed out MRW wall calendars and training schedule calendars.

Erin Zindt – MAP – Erin reported the hiring of Steve Shope out of Bozeman. Erin said there are just four MAP personnel in the state. They hold many trainings, but on a smaller scale. Some trainings are listed on the METC calendar. Anna suggested that new personnel come to the funding workshops.

Anna Miller informed the group that they have lost a valuable member of TSEP since Valerie Short Passed away. Anna added that Kacey Pilon is a new Program Specialist at Commerce.

Lisa Moisey with Bear Paw Development – Lisa suggested when preparing for testifying before the Legislature to have some recommended talking points. Also, visual aids are good, including project photos showing issues or deficiencies. If you have things to share that would benefit those testifying, please submit to Lindsay. Anna added that you can look through the archives for examples of what has been done previously.

Kari Smith, DEQ – Kari and the Water Quality Division works more closely with communities. Think about what would help communities – direct communication. She posed the question of how DEQ can make better sense to towns since many people in small towns get overwhelmed. Anna reminded all of the workshop held before the MRW conference in February. She encouraged all to get community members to those workshops.

Pam Nelson, Commerce, BOI – Pam has nothing new to report.

Mark Smith, DEQ, Drinking Water – Mark said they are still dealing with the vacancies left by Jerry Paddock, Gary Wiens and Mark Golz who retired. John McDunn, who is on the Drinking Water side, is helping out. And they have new hire, Denver Fraser.

Mike Abrahamson, DEQ, Wastewater – Mike, who has been doing the work of Paul LaVigne, who retired, will fill that position as acting for 6 months. Jeremy Perlinski, who came from Morrison Maierle, is a wastewater engineer with SRF. Mike said they will add one more engineer and be fully staffed by summer.

Lindsay Volpe, DNRC – Lindsay began by handing out a chart showing what is funded by cash vs. bonding in the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program. She added that Planning Grant cycle is open and will close the end of February and hopefully be funded by March. People are looking for other funding sources. Sonja added that DNRC's private grant program is out of funds. She said there should be funding by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Lindsay reported that the Engineer position with DNRC's Resource Development Bureau closes January 15<sup>th</sup>.

Dept. of Commerce BOI – Pam Nelson mentioned that BOI is dealing with retirements. Jerri Burton left in December.

Sarah Robbins – RATES – Sarah said her office is still working on projects. Dave Schultz is still on. She goes to eastern Montana each month to reach out to communities.

Rika Lashley, Morrison Maierle – Rika noted that regarding projects with Rural Development, the contractors have been slow getting claims submitted.

Break 10:43 – 10:58

Anna Miller, DNRC Regional Water:

Anna held up a large map of Rocky Boys – North Central Regional Water System. On it she showed a water treatment plant project for \$40 million that will be in completion by 2020 at the original site. This plant will help supply water to the eastern part of the regional systems and also to the Rocky Boy's reservation. Anna noted that Dry-Redwater and Central Montana systems have not received federal authorization yet. Mark Smith added that they are having weekly meetings on the treatment plant. Denver Fraser will be DEQ's Water Plant Engineer on the project. Anna said that Dry Prairie project may be done in 2023 with complete build out.

**Workshops** – Erin said the agenda for MRW conference is February is done. Alice added that RD was working on a Livingston wastewater project. Alice added that we can present on that. Erin has a scheduled meeting with Steve Troendle on the 14<sup>th</sup> if the federal government is not still shutdown.

**Congressional Update** – No representatives in attendance.

**Uniform Application** – Nick Clos, MRW – Nick asked if there were other WASACT meetings or workshops. Erin explained that we developed the brochure since attendance at trainings was low last time. Mark Smith added that Karen Sanchez wanted to add some language and Steve wanted to share an Environmental assessment program.

**Website** – Lindsay said the website has a new face. Some topics have also changed. She said on the sidebar, there is a link to the funding table. According to Michele Marsh at DEQ, 00900 needs updating. Mark said they will update it again and sent it to Lindsay. Let Lindsay know of any corrections on the WASACT website.

Kari Smith reported that DEQ's Water Quality website underwent some reorganization and she is interested in any feedback. This was the first change in the site since 1998. Erin and Sarah commented that it is easier to find things on the site now. Kari said that the website was meant for people outside the DEQ agency to find information.

End of Updates

Next meeting date will be set at a later date. Details will be emailed to the group. We will book the Montana Room at DNRC so we have more room.

Meeting adjourned at 11:23.

Minutes taken by Denise Cook